

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



May 12, 1989

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO: I-30-89

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS
ALL COUNTY GAIN COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT IN
GAIN

The purpose of this letter is to inform Counties about the State Department of Social Services' (SDSS) intention to begin a demonstration project on concurrent enrollment in GAIN. In this context, concurrent enrollment means that participants attend required educational activities identified prior to assessment along with post-assessment vocational or training activities.

Background

Current regulations provide that GAIN participants who must be referred to English-as-a-Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) or General Educational Development (GED) instruction based on their appraisal results, may choose to first complete their job club or job search requirement. The participant may also fulfill the education and job club or job search requirements concurrently. However, these participants may not be referred to assessment until the educational component is completed. Participants whose initial referral is to assessment but who also require educational services, will participate in those educational activities in addition to other post-assessment activities. After assessment, all participants may be concurrently assigned to more than one component as part of their employment plan.

A number of Counties have expressed concern about the requirement that the pre-assessment education activity must be completed prior to assessment. Among the concerns related to current policy is that when educational resources are limited, an inordinate length of time will be spent by participants to complete basic education and subsequent vocational training requirements. Proponents of concurrent enrollment feel that in many instances basic education and vocational training can be

successfully combined to enhance the individuals' motivation to complete both activities. The proponents argue that a concurrent process would reduce the amount of time spent completing the education and training required by most employment plans.

Several members of the County Welfare Directors Association GAIN Technical Subcommittee (GTS) who believe concurrent enrollment has merit offered to pilot a revised referral process in their Counties. Also, other Counties that are not GTS members contacted SDSS to express interest in participating in such a pilot.

Project Objectives

In response to this interest, SDSS intends to test some concurrent enrollment concepts on a limited basis. This would allow SDSS to assess the impact on overall program operations before considering statewide implementation. Each demonstration project site will be expected to test all of the following hypotheses:

- #1 Concurrent enrollment results in the expenditure of assessment funds for people who would have gone off aid prior to assessment under the current flow.
- #2 Participants concurrently enrolled in education and training get jobs sooner.
- #3 Persons who obtain early employment without completing education will return to AFDC due to lack of basic skills.
- #4 Participants concurrently enrolled in education and training are more motivated and as a result do not drop out of education activities.
- #5 Participants lacking basic literacy are unable to successfully participate in and complete training activities.
- #6 Participants lacking basic literacy are unable to successfully complete the assessment process.

County Participation

The opportunity to submit a demonstration project proposal for consideration is being extended to all Counties by this letter. The nine-month demonstration projects are targeted to begin July 1, 1989. Counties may begin at a later date with SDSS approval.

Those Counties which are interested in participating should prepare the proposal according to the attached guidelines. After all proposals are received, SDSS will evaluate and select the demonstration project sites. Because of the complex nature of the data to be reviewed, no more than ten Counties will be selected. The Counties participating in the demonstration project will be expected to collect data on the operation of the project and evaluate the outcomes of the model they are testing. These evaluations will be submitted to SDSS on the completion of the project. There is no additional funding available to Counties to operate the project.

Program Requirements

In order to conduct the demonstration project the Director will be requested to waive the necessary regulations in accordance with provisions in Welfare and Institutions Code Section 18204. Although certain regulations will be waived, the project must be consistent with statutory requirements. Therefore, there are certain procedures that all participating Counties must follow.

Under this project, GAIN participants may enroll in post-assessment activities while completing ESL, ABE or GED instruction. In order to do this, these individuals must first have:

- (1) completed job club/job search requirements, and
- (2) had an assessment performed after the completion of the job club/job search requirements.

After assessment, the participants' employment plan and contract may combine ESL, ABE or GED with other appropriate post-assessment components.

The following program requirements will apply to participants in the demonstration project:

- o If the educational component entered into before assessment is still in progress at the time the assessment is conducted, then the two year limit contained in MPP Section 42-730.54 will not apply.
- o Persons in a concurrent enrollment situation under the demonstration project who fail or refuse without good cause to participate in an educational component pursuant to MPP Section 42-772.5 will be subject to cause determinations and potential money management or sanctions in accordance with MPP Sections 42-781, 42-785 and 42-786.
- o Activities entered into after the assessment and pursuant to the employment plan will be terminated when:
 - (1) a participant fails or refuses without good cause to participate in any activity entered into after the assessment and pursuant to the employment plan, or
 - (2) a participant fails to meet the criteria for successful completion, as specified in MPP Section 42-774.13 and .3, in any activity.

The participant must continue with the educational activity.

- o Participants to be included in the demonstration project shall be informed of all these provisions prior to the signing of any participant contract(s).

If your County is interested in being considered as a potential demonstration project site, please send your proposals no later than June 15, 1989 to:

Department of Social Services
GAIN and Employment Services
Policy Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 6-138
Sacramento, CA 95814

If you have any questions, please contact your GAIN County Operations Analyst at (916) 324-6962.



DENNIS J. BOYLE
Deputy Director
Management Systems and
Evaluation Division

Attachment

cc: CWDA

**CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
PROPOSAL GUIDELINES
APRIL 1989**

I. PROPOSAL OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

1. Brief statement of the problem(s) in your County that the project will address. Statement of goals and objectives to be achieved. These should be correlated with the hypotheses listed in the ACIN.
2. Anticipated outcome(s) that will demonstrate what you expect the project to accomplish.
3. Brief description of program flow.

II. DESCRIPTION OF CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

1. Description of the criteria for selecting which participants will be eligible for concurrent enrollment.
2. Estimates of the number of concurrent participants during the project.
3. Description of how the decision to use concurrent enrollment is reached, including the role of the client, GAIN case manager and assessor. This section must specify the individual responsible for making the final decision.
4. Description of when the assessment will be conducted. Include a listing of components to be combined as concurrent assignments.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. Description of how the County will monitor and evaluate the project to determine whether stated objectives are being accomplished.
2. Description of how the data will be collected in order to effectively evaluate the impact of concurrent enrollment in your County.
3. Description of how the County will work with providers to contract for various services in a typical concurrent assignment.

4. Description of tracking systems which will be used to track costs, case management and other additional time charges, to follow client progress and to document provision of supportive services.

IV. DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION

In order to effectively test the six hypotheses, the County must collect the following mandatory data elements:

- Number of persons in the concurrent enrollment target group who are assessed.
- Number of persons not in the target group who are assessed during the same period of time.
- Number of concurrently enrolled participants who complete job training or get a job in a related field prior to completion of their education component, by component (i.e., ABE, ESL, or GED),
 - o The number of these persons who return to aid and the number of months they were off aid.
- For those who attended education only and those in concurrent enrollment provide:
 - o Number and percentage who complete basic education.
 - o Number and percentage of absenteeism.
 - o Number and percentage who are making satisfactory progress.
- For persons scoring below 215 on the CASAS test and those needing ESL, provide:
 - o Number and percentage of participants referred for training who were rejected upfront by the training agency and reasons for the rejections.
 - o Number and percentage of participants who exited training without completion.

- o Number and percentage of participants in training who made satisfactory progress.
- Number and percentage of those participants referred to assessment who were unable to complete assessment and the reasons for noncompletion.